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January 28, 1963

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Schools of Medicine
Stanford University
Medical Center
Palo Alto, California

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

I read your letter very carefully and I found nothing there to disagree with. I went through my report carefully and I find that it does not really contradict anything in your letter.

I think it is a matter of intent. I have been searching for a processing scheme that is strong enough to sustain a viable pilot model. Once this model is built, other components can be added. I find that the citation index is not strong enough to sustain a pilot model. I do not mean to say that it is useless. Indeed, I think that a system so rigidly designed that it cannot incorporate the citation index would not be a very good system. Citation index should be part of a functioning system but it cannot serve as the basic search component to begin with. That is' so because the citation index depends on a low probability event. But low probability events are very important and a system that cannot exploit them would be that much the poorer.

My report must have given you the impression that I degrade the use of citation index in general. That was not what I had in mind. I want to correct that impression and thank you for calling it to my attention. Since others may have gotten the same impression, I will refer to it again in my next report.

Very truly yours,

M. M. Kessler

M. M. Kessler

MMK/ef

M. M. Kessler

4/24/63
The reply from Lederberg dated 4/24/63
PSAC-SP. NSF Congress